

Region's Long-Range Transportation Plan, are a multilane controlled access facility in northern Harris County which would be part of a third circumferential loop (State Highway 99) around Houston. The proposed improvement length is approximately 13 miles. Improvements in this area are necessary to provide mobility to the growing area of northwest Harris County.

A Draft EIS will evaluate various transportation alternatives between State Highway 290 and State Highway 249 near Tomball. The majority of this corridor crosses relatively undeveloped properties in Harris County. Among the alternatives to be studied are the "No-action" alternative, Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative, Mass Transit alternative and Roadway Build alternative. Cities and towns in this region include Hockley and Tomball. This study is authorized pursuant to the Texas Transportation Commission Minute Order No. 108744 issued May 27, 1999.

The scoping meeting will be on February 2, 2000, at Tomball College, 30555 Tomball Parkway (SH 249) from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Large scale maps with environmental and social features will be available at the meeting, and several corridors will be shown on these maps. These maps and corridors will reflect input from public workshops held in August 1999. The scoping process will continue throughout the development of the environmental document.

Impacts caused by the construction and operation of the facility will vary according to the transportation alternative utilized. Generally, impacts would include the following: transportation impacts (construction detours, construction traffic, mobility improvement and evacuation route improvement), air and noise impacts from construction equipment and operation of the facility, water quality impacts from construction area and roadway storm water runoff, impacts to waters of the United States including wetlands from right of way encroachment, and impacts to residents and businesses based on potential displacements.

Letters describing the proposed action soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have interest in this proposal. To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed

action and the Environmental Impact Statement should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205 Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding governmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: December 23, 1999.

**Wilbur Lee Gibbons,**

*Urban Program Engineer, Austin, Texas.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### **Environmental Impact Statement: Corridor 18 (Proposed Extension of I-69 From Indianapolis to Evansville, Indiana)**

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for the proposed extension of I-69 from Indianapolis to Evansville in Southwest Indiana (Corridor 18).

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Larry Heil, Planning and Program Development Manager, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Building, Room 254, 575 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, Telephone (317) 226-7491, or Cristine Klika, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Transportation, 100 N. Senate Avenue, Room N755, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2217, Telephone (317) 232-5526.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will prepare a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on proposed highway corridors to provide better access to Southwest Indiana and better access between Indianapolis and Evansville. The southern terminus of the proposed action will be I-64 just north of Evansville, Indiana and the northern terminus will be I-465 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The length of the proposed corridors will vary between 225 and 274 kilometers (140 and 170 miles).

A previous Notice of Intent (NOI) was published on December 5, 1990 to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a section of highway between Indianapolis and Evansville

titled the Southwest Indiana Highway. The Southwest Indiana Highway Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was approved for circulation by FHWA on March 27, 1996 and circulated for review and comment. Based upon comments received on the DEIS, the scope and termini of the proposed action are hereby being expanded to include the entire corridor between Indianapolis and Evansville, Indiana. The original December 5, 1999 NOI and March 27, 1996 DEIS for the Southwest Indiana Highway are hereby formally withdrawn. The proposed extension of I-69 from Indianapolis to Evansville (Corridor 18) Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement described in this NOI will be the decision-making process that serves to replace the previous Southwest Indiana Highway decision-making process.

The essence of the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement for this proposed action will be to resolve "big picture" planning issues such as "build" vs. "no-build"; modal preferences; preferred corridor; and logical termini for "projects of independent utility" within the preferred corridor.

This proposed action is intended to strengthen the highway network in Southwest Indiana by providing improved linkages among the existing highway routes in the region and by providing more direct connections among the region's major population centers. By strengthening the highway network, this proposed action is intended to stimulate economic growth in Southwest Indiana by enhancing access to existing centers of economic activity and creating new opportunities where possible.

This proposed action is intended to complete the Indiana portion of Corridor 18, a strategic, high priority highway serving east-central United States. Corridor 18 is planned to be a continuous north-south corridor linking Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Any alternative corridors under evaluation in Southwest Indiana must be analyzed with respect to meeting the objectives of Corridor 18.

The development of the traditional environmental impact study for a project of this length (225 to 274 kilometers (140 to 170 miles)) and scale (the entire region of Southwest Indiana) would be a lengthy process and would result in a voluminous and unwieldy environmental impact statement. Consequently, the FHWA after consultation with various resource agencies, is using a *tiered* EIS concept to focus on issues in an organized manner as discussed in the Council of

Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1502.20. The Tier 1 document will be a detailed document with a comprehensive, in-depth analysis of alternative corridors. The Tier 1 document will involve extensive environmental studies, as well as transportation studies, economic impact studies, and cost analysis. This document will provide the basis for FHWA to grant corridor location approval for a specific corridor.

The Tier 2 documents will be a series of smaller studies for individual sections of the corridor. These sections of the corridor would have independent utility—i.e., each section could serve a useful transportation purpose by itself. Within each section of the corridor, specific alignments would be identified and evaluated based upon their social, economic and environmental impacts. The Tier 2 documents would be more closely tailored to address the needs of the communities located within each project section.

A scoping meeting will be held for the regulatory agencies followed by several public scoping meetings held at various locations in the project area. Early Coordination letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies. As part of the process, public hearings will also be held. Public notice will be given as to the time and place of the meetings and hearings. The public hearings will be held after the draft EIS is available for review.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action is addressed and any significant impacts are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and this Tier 1 EIS should be directed to the FHWA or the INDOT at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: December 21, 1999.

**Lawrence M. Heil,**

*Planning and Program Development Manager, Indianapolis, IN.*

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**BILLING CODE 4910–22–M**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement; Tippecanoe, Carroll and Cass Counties, Indiana

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of scoping meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing an announcement to the public that a Scoping Meeting will take place in regards to the environmental document for a proposed transportation project in Tippecanoe, Carroll and Cass Counties, Indiana to improve and/or relocate SR 25 from Lafayette to Logansport, a distance of approximately 54 kilometers (34 miles). The meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 15, 2000 at 8:00 a.m. in the Radisson Inn Lafayette Meeting Room, located at 4343 State Road 26 East, Lafayette, Indiana.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Larry Heil, Planning and Program Development Manager, Federal Highway Administrator, Room 254, Federal Office Building, 575 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, Telephone (317) 226–7491.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The purpose of the scoping meeting is to invite local, State, and Federal agencies to help identify issues that may impact the proposed project. Scoping is intended to ensure that problems are identified early and properly studied, that issues of little significance do not consume time and effort, that the draft EIS is thorough and balanced, and that delays occasioned by an inadequate draft EIS is avoided. The scoping process should identify the public and agency concerns; clearly define the environmental issues and alternatives to be examined in the EIS including the elimination of nonsignificant issues; identify related issues which originate from separate legislation, regulation, or Executive Order (e.g., historic preservation or endangered species concerns); and identify state and local agency requirements which must be addressed.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning the proposed action and the environmental document should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning

and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: December 21, 1999.

**Lawrence M. Heil,**

*Planning and Program Development Manager, Indianapolis, Indiana*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Bureau of Transportation Statistics

#### Agency Information Collection; Activity Under OMB Review; Part 249 Preservation of Air Carrier Records

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) invites the general public, industry and other Federal Agencies to comment on the continuing need for and usefulness of DOT requiring certificated air carriers to preserve accounting records, consumer complaint letters, reservation reports and records, system reports of aircraft movements, etc.

**DATES:** Written comments should be submitted by March 6, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be directed to: Office of Airline Information, K–25, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590–0001, FAX NO. (202) 366–3383, or EMAIL [bernard.stankus@bts.gov](mailto:bernard.stankus@bts.gov).

**COMMENTS:** Comments should identify the OMB # 2138–0006 and submit a duplicate copy to the address listed above. Commenters wishing the Department to acknowledge receipt of their comments must submit with those comments a self-addressed stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: Comments on OMB # 2138–0006. The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Bernie Stankus, Office of Airline Information, K–25, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590–0001, (202) 366–4387.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*OMB Approval No. 2138–0006*

*Title: Preservation of Air Carrier Records Part 249.*